

UCLA Faculty Association

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Tuesday, November 19, 2024

New Regent









From Gov. Newsom's website: *Governor Gavin Newsom... announced the following appointment:*

Robert "Bob" Myers, of Santa Monica, has been appointed to the University of California Board of Regents. Myers has been an Advisor for the Washington Commanders since 2024 and a National Basketball Association Studio Host and Analyst at ESPN since 2023. He held multiple roles at the Golden State Warriors from 2012 to 2023, including General Manager and President of Basketball Operations. Myers was a Managing Executive and Agent at Wasserman Media Group from 2006 to 2010. He earned a Juris Doctor degree from Loyola Law School and a Bachelor of Arts in Business and Economics from the University of California, Los Angeles. This position requires Senate confirmation and there is no compensation. Myers is registered to vote with no party preference.

Source: <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2024/11/15/governor-newsom-announces-appointments-11-15-24-2/>.

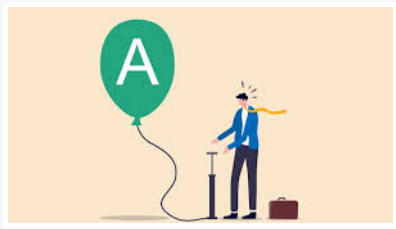
There is no further explanation for this choice. However, as blog readers will know, Newsom showed up at a closed Regents meeting and kicked up the storm over UCLA's change of athletic conference and its impact on Berkeley. Part of the outfall of that intervention was the creation of a Special Committee on Athletics at the Regents who had not previously showed great interest in athletics. It may be that having someone with an athletic background is one reason for this choice. Newly-appointed Regents must be approved by the state Senate. However, they take office on an interim basis prior to Senate action.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:25 AM No comments:      

Labels: [athletics](#), [UC Regents](#)

Inflation

[Inside Higher Ed](#) recently carried a learned piece entitled "Grade Inflation: An Ahistorical Narrative." After pointing to the interesting fact that back in the day (19th century), grades as we know them did not exist, the authors agree that grade inflation - starting in the 1960s - is real. But the piece never gets to the cause. And the cause is not hard to discern.



During the 1960s, and especially in the decade that followed, students - as a consequence of the protests back then - were given the opportunity to rate their professors and those ratings began to matter in the promotion process.

Unhappy students were able to create unhappy consequences for professors. That change created the incentive system that led to the outcome.

When prices inflate, there is always a higher price available. Thus, something that cost \$10 could later cost \$12, then \$14, etc. There is, unfortunately, no letter before "A" and so eventually grades stop going up and all become A. Unlike uncapped price inflation, relativity disappears under a regime of grade inflation. Grade inflation stops when everyone hits the cap. While one good can always be more expensive than another, nobody's A is better than anyone else's A. If you don't like that outcome, you need to change the incentive system. Some academic departments do so by requiring grading on a curve and (presumably) penalizing faculty who deviate.

There are obvious problems with grading on a curve, particularly in small classes, but no incentive system is perfect. The true ahistorical lesson is that people, even faculty (!), respond to incentives. It has always been true. It will always be true.

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*<https://www.insidehighered.com/opinion/views/2024/11/14/grade-inflation-narrative-ahistorical-opinion>.

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Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:15 AM No comments:

Labels: miscellaneous

Monday, November 18, 2024

Watch the Regents Meeting of Nov. 12, 2024

The Regents met at UC-San Francisco last week. Tuesday's meeting included the Health Services Committee - evidently differed from last October to avoid problems around October 7th - and the Investments Committee.

The Health meeting began with public comments, all dealing with the Israel-Gaza War. There was also a very brief disruption during one of the subsequent topics, probably related to the war. EVP Rubin reviewed the year's developments in UC Health and then a discussion of what UC was doing in local community health. Regent Makarechian noted some confusion in data presented concerning the share of UC expenditures in uncompensated care.

Of most interest to UCLA was the presentation on UCLA's establishment of a Medicare Advantage plan for the LA County market which will launch on January 1. The plan is already advertising and taking in subscribers. This plan should NOT be confused be confused with the Medicare Advantage plan that UC offers to its own retirees. It was said that three fourths of patients at UC generally are connected with government-operated programs. About half of such patients are said to be Medicare. Forty percent of all patients at UCLA are said to be Medicare.

While UCLA currently services patients from other Medicare Advantage plans, it got permission from the Regents to start its own plan in LA County from the Regents two years ago. It was said that 60-65% of Medicare-eligible patients in the County are already in some Medicare Advantage plan.

Makarechian asked about the financial sustainability of the new UCLA plan. It was said that UCLA would need to attract 15,000 to 16,000 clients to its plan at a minimum to be sustainable. But it is shooting for a significantly higher intake.

The question was raised as to whether the basic license that UCLA obtained to set up its plan could cover other campuses with med centers if they were to choose to set up similar Medicare Advantage plans and it was said that the license would cover such potential plans.

It seems likely that the other campuses will be watching UCLA's experience.

The recent expansions of the UCLA via purchases of hospitals and other facilities - and the fact that there is a large network of urgent care centers and practices around the County under the UCLA brand may reflect the Medicare Advantage venture. In order to create a Medicare Advantage plan in a county, applicants have to show that they have facilities close to areas where there are significant concentrations of Medicare-eligible populations.

The Health Services Committee concluded with a presentation on UC-Davis' veterinary hospital. It was noted that some treatments on animals translate into new forms of treatment for people.

At the Investments Committee, there was a relatively brief presentation without the usual slides by UC CIO Bachhar. At the moment, his office is dealing with a portfolio of \$188 billion of which \$104 billion is the pension plan. He said the outlook for the US economy is bright. And he tended to avoid questions about the effect of the election, notably about the earlier UC divestment from fossil fuels, an industry which the incoming Trump administration is likely to favor.

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We are happy to report that the Internet Archive is getting back to normal. While there are still hiccups remaining from the cyber attack, we were able to upload the various Regents sessions for November since - as blog readers will know - it is unclear how long the Regents will retain their recordings.

You can find both the Health Services and the Investments recordings at:

https://archive.org/details/regents-health-services-committee-11-12-2024.

The Health Services recording is at:

https://ia600603.us.archive.org/29/items/regents-health-services-committee-11-12-2024/Regents%20Health%20Services%20Committee%2011-12-2024.mp4.

(The material on the UCLA Medicare Advantage plan is at 1:12.17 to 1:49.40.)

The Investments recording is at:

https://ia600603.us.archive.org/29/items/regents-health-services-committee-11-12-2024/Regents%20Investments%20Committee%2011-12-2024.mp4.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments:

Labels: health care, UC Regents, UC-Davis, UC-San Francisco, UCLA

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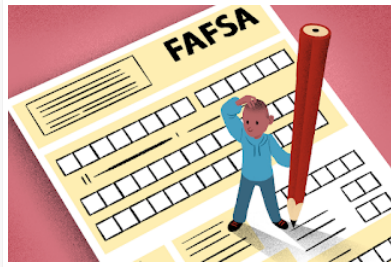
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Contributors

- California Policy Issues
- Toby Higbie
- UCLA Faculty Association

The FAFSA Drama Continues - Part 18 (trying again)



From *Inside Higher Ed*: *The 2025–26 Free Application for Federal Student Aid is on track to launch ahead of its Dec. 1 deadline*, Education Department officials announced on a press call Thursday afternoon, likely around Nov. 22—though the officials said they couldn't confirm an exact date. The department released this year's FAFSA in phases to test the form for bugs and user compatibility issues. Officials said the rollout entered its fourth and final testing phase

Wednesday, after initial testing received cautiously positive feedback from families and college access groups...

All eyes are on the FAFSA after last year's overhaul and bungled rollout of the application led to months of delays and a significant decline in completion rates, dampening first-year enrollment this fall. Last year, the form launched at the end of December, with a slew of technical errors and glitches that flummoxed students and stymied financial aid offices...

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2024/11/15/2025-26-fafsa-will-launch-ahead-schedule>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:10 AM](#) No comments:

Labels: [admissions](#), [miscellaneous](#)

Sunday, November 17, 2024

More Subway Work in Westwood



Wilshire Bl and Westwood Bl: Manhole Maintenance Work

Summary

Metro contractors will access manholes for maintenance needs on Wilshire Blvd and Westwood Bl to continue work at the UCLA Station. The work will require temporary closures restricting traffic along Wilshire Bl, Westwood Bl, Ashton Av, and Midvale Av. Please follow the traffic restriction signage.

Date: November 16, 2024, to January 15, 2025

Work hours: Continuous Weekends, Friday, 9pm to Monday, 6am

Traffic Control:

Phase 1:

- Two westbound lanes on Wilshire Bl will be closed to traffic between Glendon Av and Westwood Av, including the left turn pockets at the intersection.
- The east leg crosswalk at the intersection of Wilshire Bl and Westwood Bl will be closed. Three other crosswalks will remain accessible.

Phase 2:

- A Westwood Bl lane for north and southbound traffic will be closed between Ashton Av and Wilshire Bl.
- The northbound left turn pocket lanes will be closed at Westwood Bl and Wilshire and Westwood Bl and Aston Av.
- One of the left turn pockets for westbound Wilshire Bl traffic at Westwood Bl will be closed, and one will remain open.
- The south leg crosswalk at Wilshire Blvd/Westwood Bl will be closed. Three other crosswalks will remain open at all times.

Phase 3:

- The Ashton Av center lane will be closed between Westwood Bl and Midvale Av.
- The east leg crosswalk at Midvale Av and Aston will be closed. The west leg crosswalk will always be maintained for pedestrian access in this area.

Noteworthy:

- All work will receive the necessary permits and approvals.
- Access to driveways, residences & businesses will always be maintained unless notified in advance.
- Access for pedestrians will be maintained outside of construction zones.
- Access for the Fire Department and emergency responders will be maintained.
- Parking restrictions will be implemented in the immediate area of the work zone.
- Construction is dynamic and schedules are subject to change.
- **24/7 Hotline:** 213-922-6934

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Wilshire Bl and Gayley Av: Manhole Access Work**Summary**

Metro contractors will access a pressure-rated manhole on Wilshire Blvd and Gayley to continue work at the UCLA Station. The work will require temporary closures restricting traffic along Wilshire Bl, Gayley Av, and Midvale Av. Please follow the traffic restriction signage.

Date: November 2024 to January 15, 2025

Work hours: Monday to Friday, 9pm to 6am

Traffic Control:**Phase 1:**

- Three eastbound Wilshire Blvd eastbound lanes between Veteran Ave to Gayley Av will be closed.
- The south leg crosswalk closure at Wilshire Bl and Gayley Av will be closed. Three other crosswalks will remain accessible at all times.
- Northbound through traffic on Midvale Av and the left turn pocket between Ashton and Av and Wilshire Bl will be restricted.
- The southbound Gayley Av through traffic and left turn pocket between Lindbrook Dr and Wilshire Bl will be closed.

Phase 2:

- Three eastbound Wilshire Blvd eastbound lanes between Veteran Ave to Gayley Ave will be closed.
- The east leg crosswalk at Wilshire Blvd/Gayley Ave will be closed. Three other crosswalks will remain open at all times.
- Northbound Midvale Av through lane traffic and the left turn pocket between Ashton and Av and Wilshire Bl will be closed.
- The southbound Gayley Av through traffic and left turn pocket between Lindbrook Dr and Wilshire Bl will be closed.
- The westbound Wilshire Bl left turn pocket at Gayley Av/Midvale Av to proceed southbound will be closed.


Noteworthy:

- All work will receive the necessary permits and approvals.
- Access to driveways, residences & businesses will always be maintained unless notified in advance.

- Access for pedestrians will be maintained outside of construction zones.
- Access for the Fire Department and emergency responders will be maintained.
- Parking restrictions will be implemented in the immediate area of the work zone.
- Construction is dynamic and schedules are subject to change.
- **24/7 Hotline:** 213-922-6934

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Source: <https://cloud.sfmtc.metro.net/buildingthed>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments: 

Labels: [traffic](#), [transportation](#), [UCLA](#)

Cash Report Through October

The state continues to take in more revenue this fiscal year than projected when the current-year budget was enacted. State controller Malia Cohen reports an excess of projected revenue of \$5.7 billion, essentially coming from income taxes and corporate taxes. That outcome suggests the overage mainly reflects capital gains and corporate profits. Sales tax receipts are performing more or less on target, suggesting that the underlying economy is performing as anticipated.



The state's unused borrowable resources now total \$97 billion, almost \$6 billion ahead of projections, and veritable mountain of cash. So why the squeeze? Basically, the extra revenue is largely committed. Note that the voters approved more bonds whose debt service will be required in the future. And not all of that cash can be used legally to support the general fund beyond intrayear borrowing to deal with seasonality.

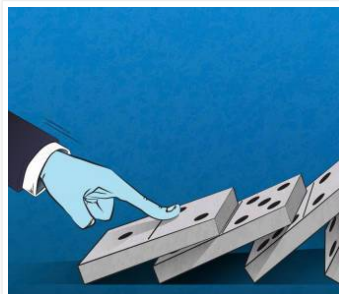
The latest cash report is at <https://sco.ca.gov/Files-ARD/CASH/October2024StatementofGeneralFundCashReceiptsandDisbursements.pdf>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:15 AM No comments: 

Labels: [controller](#), [State Budget](#)

Saturday, November 16, 2024

Repercussions of Failed UC labor bill



From [CalMatters](#): California's top Senate Democrat called a prominent labor union "morally bankrupt" after it spent more than \$1 million to oppose the state's most vulnerable Democratic senator in a tight race that could put a Republican in his seat.

The union apparently spent the money against Sen. Josh Newman of Fullerton because leaders were angered by at least one vote that he cast. And while it's not uncommon for unions to criticize or threaten Democrats who stray from their agenda, Senate Democrats said that spending such a large amount to help elect a Republican

was a step too far... On Tuesday, Newman was trailing Steven Choi, a former Republican Assemblymember and Irvine mayor, by about 9,400 votes with about 126,000 ballots left to process in Orange County.

The union, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3299, was furious at Newman for joining a group of Senate Democrats in killing a bill last year that the union sponsored, according to Newman and his Senate colleagues. The bill sought to enshrine the rights of workers at the University of California in the state constitution.*

A spokesperson for the union and its lobbyist, Richie Ross, could not be reached for comment. The union, representing 30,000 workers at 10 UC campuses as well as medical centers, clinics and research laboratories, is planning a two-day strike for next week, the latest in a longstanding labor battle that was reflected in the worker rights issues raised in the bill...








Full story at <https://calmatters.org/politics/2024/11/afscme-against-california-democrat/>.

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*A description of the bill: This measure would require employees of the Regents of the University of California to have the right to, and be covered by, certain basic state labor standards, as provided. The measure would require individuals who perform certain work for the regents to have the right to the payment of a prevailing wage. The measure would authorize the

Legislature to enact laws that further these rights, establish, define, or specify the basic state labor standards applicable to the regents, or establish other health, safety, and labor protections for individuals performing work for the regents.

Source: https://digitaldemocracy.calmatters.org/bills/ca_202320240aca6.

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